

REMARKS

The last Office Action of April 3, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration of the instant application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-29 are pending in the application. Claims 2-5, 8-16, 22-23 and 25-29 have been withdrawn from further consideration. Claims 1 and 17 have been amended. No claims have been canceled or added. Amendments to the specification have been made. No fee is due.

It is noted that the drawings are objected to because of an informality. It is further noted that claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 4,050,130 to Pitner.

Claims 17-19, 21 and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Pitner.

Claim 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Pitner in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,317,341 to Krude.

OBJECTION TO THE DRAWING

Applicant has corrected the typographic error in paragraph [0033] of the specification to make it consistent with the drawings. No new matter has been added.

Withdrawal of the objection to the drawing is thus respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Applicant has amended claim 1 by adding "central" before "axial projection".

This change is self-explanatory and does not narrow the claim to trigger prosecution history estoppel.

Withdrawal of the rejection of the claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112 is thus respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(b) AND 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 17 by incorporating the flat and coextensive disposition of the resistance member against the bottom wall of the cup. In addition, both claims 1 and 17 now expressly set forth the presence of a lubricant reservoir as a result of the particular configuration of the resistance member. The provision of such a lubricant reservoir provides benefits in particular as far as service life of the cup is concerned. Reference is made in particular to paragraph [0008] of the instant specification.

The Pitner reference discloses a bearing arrangement including a washer which is disposed between the trunnion and the confronting end wall of the cup and made of a material so as to be elastically deformable when mounted. As shown in Fig. 1, the washer, which the Examiner equates with the resistance member of the present invention, has a wavy configuration in clear contrast to the coextensive flat extension of the resistance member of the present invention. In addition, Pitner is completely silent as to the presence of a lubricant reservoir. The only reference in Pitner to lubrication is in col. 4, lines 61, 62 in the context of the description of the embodiment of Fig. 6 with respect to the presence of a "cup 53" which is made of deformable self-lubricating material.

For the reasons set forth above, it is applicant's contention that Pitner neither teaches nor suggests the features of the present invention, as recited in claims 1 and 17.

As for the rejection of the retained dependent claims, these claims depend on claims 1 and 17, respectively, share their presumably allowable features, and therefore it is respectfully submitted that these claims should also be allowed.

Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b) and 103(a) and allowance of at least claims 1, 6, 7, 17-21 and 24 are thus respectfully requested.

CITED REFERENCES

Applicant has also carefully scrutinized the further cited prior art and finds it without any relevance to the claims on file. It is thus felt that no specific discussion thereof is necessary.

CLARIFICATION AMENDMENT

Applicant has made amendments to the specification to correct obvious typographic errors. These changes are self-explanatory and do not contain any new matter.

PRIORITY DOCUMENT

Applicant submits a certified copy of the priority document under 35 U.S.C. §119(a)-(d),

CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that when reconsidering the claims in the light of the above comments, the Examiner will agree that the invention is in no way properly met or anticipated or even suggested by any of the references however they are considered.

In view of the above presented remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all claims on file should be considered patentably differentiated over the art and should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

Respectfully submitted,

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